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To Mordaunt Sharp,
with warm thanks
and good wishes.

from James Mackintosh

Sep. 1928.

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Insc

THE RED, RED DAWN

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A SON OF CAIN

IN THE WAKE OF THE PHŒNIX

IOLÄUS

ON THE FACE OF A STAR

ETC.

THE RED, RED DAWN

BY

JAMES A. MACKERETH

LONDON

ERSKINE MACDONALD, LTD.

MCMXVII

TO LIEUT.-COL. SIR MARK SYKES, BART.

DEAR SIR MARK,

In these great days when every enlightened Englishman is a moral patriot and every true democrat in these Islands a fighting Englishman in heart and deed, the leisure of one so actively and ardently patriotic as yourself must be wholly absorbed by numerous and pressing duties. Yet some months ago you made time and took the trouble to send to me—an entire stranger to you—a cordial and most heartening commendation. I was greatly surprised and gratified by your generosity, the more so because I had long felt for your forthrightness of character, for your manly attitude to life at large and to your fellow-men individually, the most genuine respect. In token of this continual respect, with a sincerity and a heartiness equal to your own, I offer you this book.

JAMES A. MACKERETH.

STOCKA HOUSE,

COTTINGLEY, BINGLEY.

NOTE.

My thanks are due, and are cordially given, to the Editors of the various reviews and newspapers in whose columns the following poems have already appeared.

J. A. M.

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The Song of a Forerunner

To a Poet of To-morrow

(April, 1914)

HEREWARD from some irradiant dawn,
Rose-purpled, to a world grown pale,
Trailing a splendour, long withdrawn,
He comes. Triumphant Spirit, Hail !

Strong lord of thought, and feeling's king,
With heart on earth, with hope on high,
Joy-lighted like a windy spring,
And buoyant as the ranging sky,

To thee this star, with mists of flowers
And wandering beauty, speeds along
Companioned by exalted hours
And days whose several deeds are song.

'Mid spindrift of the night and morn,
Through seasons trailing ravished pride,
'Mid life—for dissolution born,
Spirit, on streaming transience ride !

The Red, Red Dawn

Like midges in a moment's ray
Time's lowly bardlets fret and fly :
Ho ! what news down the wide star-way
Blows earth-ward, Master drawing nigh ?

Some whisper on the winds of God
Awaits thy shining spirit-word,
Some wonder that shall wing the clod,
Some truth high faith hath overheard.

Thy look is toward a marvellous light ;
Meek death hath kissed the heel of thee :
Weird Prophet, 'yond the marge of night,
What news of immortality ?

What hope for lives that sterile roam,
Whose prayers and deeds the years refuse ?
Seer, for the homeless faint for home,
In time's lone darkness cold, what news ?

Grown tasteless is the goodly bread,
And bitter are the brimming wells,
And mocking drift the breathing dead
To wanton in a hundred hells ;

And, grossly grasping, man bereaves
His soul, and saddens in his choice,

The Song of a Forerunner

Dazed in a raucous world he grieves,
And dreads the hush where dwells the Voice.

While still men strain for lost delight
The winds o'er all the earth have glee ;
Deep in the grave mysterious night
The moon enthralls the listening tree ;

'Neath caring heaven remembering dew
Visits, where stars alone intrude,
The flower that half a summer through
Delights a dell with gratitude ;

Unlonely laughs the mountain stream,
The bird sings in the wilderness ;—
But, dupe of his delirious dream,
Man, man stares forth companionless !

To brother sun and sister rain
Oh take these errant days that pass !
Poet, lead us to the stars again,
And to the sighing, secret grass,

For men have tumult ever. Come
Like dew-time to a land at ease—
Where all things listen, gravely dumb,
The worship of the reverent trees ;

The Red, Red Dawn

Strike a great silence in the heart,
And set the vivid moment free
When spirit steps from time apart
And gazes in eternity ;

Make common all the great unseen :
Show heaven where careless feet have trod :
Each lonely sun a grain to glean ;
Each leaf a sky that veils a god ;

Oh, singing down the wonder-way,
Where life's brave ardours brightly meet,
Surprise in noontide's casual ray
The seraphim in every street !

Surprise the Mind in muted things
Till, thrilled to soul through flesh and bone,
We hear, beyond thought's murmurings,
In awful silence speak a stone.

Seer, like a wizard wreathed with fire,
Shiver the dark, that man may see
Depth within depth, and, high and higher,
The starry stairs of destiny ! . . .

I, gazing through the morning haze
Of dreams, espy thee, all-unknown,

The Song of a Forerunner

Brave wanderer down the nights and days,
Ecstatic, loving, and alone

In a divine unloneliness,
Or haunted by the hearts of men
The times are impotent to bless,
And all thy face grows grief,—and then

Turns as toward far uncharted seas,
Toward shores in mists of vague surmise :
Fore-seer, canst sight the glorious trees,
Dawn-lit in dales of Paradise? . . .

Oh prophet of the quickening Word !
Oh breather of the boundless Breath !
Our souls have heard, our souls have heard
Evangel in the days of death !

Strange voices speak in wave and wind ;
A God makes vocal all the earth ;
Deep in the universal mind
New powers and splendours come to birth ;—

And thine their rapture, thine their cry.
High harbinger, thy hymns shall be
As wonder in the dawn-lit sky,
As worship on the sunset sea.

The Red, Red Dawn

Be thou a spirit robed in song,
A passion in the world's employ,
At home with all, yet mid the throng
A beckoner to the hills of joy !

Come, come, bright breaker-down of laws
That dim the lively flame of truth :
Behind each old and crumbling cause
Shines God-head in eternal youth !—

Oh, give the infinite a home !
In little—lo, the mighty more !
Kin to all regal suns that roam
The daisy at a cottage door ;

The lay of midnight's loneliest bird
Is linked with all the stars on high ;
A myriad thoughts, in time unheard,
Wake in a poet's wonder-cry.

From all we issue, and are dumb :
To all we go.—Oh, Poet-seer !
Into these little shadows come,
And touch us into vastness here ! . . .

Lo, now comes beauty's conscious hour :
Joy-glittering April laughs adieu :

The Song of a Forerunner

May enters blushing in a shower :
Pipe, poets, for the world is new !

Blurred London gleams through sunset-rain :
In flashing courts 'gainst walls of fire,
As radiant as a saint in pain,
Steps poverty in blazing mire.

Come, Prophet of the riper years !
Haste, Bard, re-risen from drear eclipse !
Speak, for the world hath hungry ears !
Sing, for the world hath lyric lips !

I, that am God's blithe dust to blow
What way He pleases, hail thy face
With joy, and, trusting all things, go
A-questioning to the quiet place ;

But thou art pinioned for the skies ;
And, radiant as with inward light,
I see thee, with far fearless eyes,
A seraph mid the infinite,

And confident like God. Elate
The strong years thunder toward their goal.
Proud down the perilous wind of fate
Ride, Poet with seraphic soul !

To England

A Song of Loyalty

WE are your children, O Mother,
And tried by your testing, but true ;
Sealed of your sign and none other ;
Soul of the soul that is you ;
Yours from the past, for the morrow ;
Leal at your travail we bow,
Mother made perfect by sorrow,
With the pain-splendid brow.

Your own was our freedom that blamed you,
Our ardours with heaven-pointing beams,
Our dreams when our young zeal defamed you
Yours, Mother, grown dubious of dreams.
Lo, we that you favoured or slighted,
Our Mother, are all of us peers
In our will that your wrongs shall be righted,
In our love at the sight of your tears.

Ah, deep in our hearts is the sweetness
Of your fields where as infants we trod,

To England

When our ills were as swallows for fleetness,
In the blue-curtained play-grounds of God.
Fond days that are joys 'mid our weeping
Are set 'mid your meadows and bowers :
Our loves that lie dead in your keeping
You fondle with grass and with flowers.

Yours, yours was the beauty that blessed us ;
The kiss when our troubles were dumb ;
The hand that in childhood caressed us ;
Oh, Mother ! you need us. We come !
Love-gifts from our hell or our heaven
Take, take them and purge with your pain ;
All, all our love's best take, and leaven
Our life till 'tis lovely again,—

And true to your height, Mother, tender
And true to the best in us all !
We have pined here alone in your splendour ;
But we speed to your pain lest you fall.
Ask : we give ! Is it life or the other ?
Is it death ? Take us whole. We are come
For the sake of our dream of you, Mother,
Whose love we have longed for at home !

Oh, Lord of our fathers before us,
We have turned from the light of Thy word,

The Red, Red Dawn

We and this Mother who bore us :

Dread God, we were proud : we have erred.
We plead : On ourselves, not our brother,
Lay now the stern weight of Thy rod ;
Grind us small with Thy grief ;—but our Mother
Spare, spare her, O God !

Louvain

I

SHE held the storied centuries in her halls :
Th' enchanted glories of long-faded time
Clung like a dream about her ; thought sublime
Whispered and wondered in her tranquil walls.
A city of thought she seemed, her happy thralls
Steeped in the aureate memories of her prime ;
And, mellowed as her own mellifluent chime,
Earth's rumours came at restful intervals.

She was a time-mark to eternity,
'Mid fevered life aloof with radiant hours ;
Romance, a roseate sunset on her towers,
Sate like a consecration peacefully . . .
Hush !—the sad ghosts crave silence—This was
she—
This sepulchre, ungraced of desert flowers.

Louvain

II

Gaze, Vandal ! and be judged. Not all the rain
Of heaven, or kindliness of human years,
Shall dim this deed. Each age of man uprears
One priceless dream no hope lifts ever again.
What worship wrought, hath wisdom stored in
vain !

The humble patience and the startled tears
Of saints that serve with beauty, whom God
cheers,
Are spurned unto the dust in thy disdain !—

Thou withered soul !—Live like a blasted tree,
Left lone, wind-flouted, on the sterile rocks,
To which not ever come the mountain flocks
With friendly steps for sheltering charity :
Live on in thine own desert deed, and be
A ghoul to fancy famed that reason mocks !

Reims

AND yet again? What drug hath blurred thy
mind?

What impious pertinacity of fate

Drives thee, poor wanton, through the world's
wide hate

To shame undying, piteously blind?

A thousand years are whispering in the wind:

There is a rumour of old kings once great

And chivalrous. . . . Oh, most unfortunate

In all inequity, to bane consigned!

Woe to the soul whose sins, forbidden to die,

Stride the broad noon and are life's common
themes!

Thy name shall be a shadow in men's dreams;

And beauty shall remember with a sigh

Times gone—when swift thy dizzy dust went by

And wasted all the wonder that was Reims!

To the Lord of Hosts

BLOW, wind of God ! and volleying rain-storm
beat !

Rush on, ye thunderous armies of the air !

Break with wide power upon the world, and fare
Into our battle with wrath-winged feet !

For ruin's breath hath blighted all things sweet ;

And festering Hell with all her horrors bare

Reeks to the day ; and woe to wild despair

Wails in a night where rape and rapine meet !

Smite, scourge of God ! Consume in fire and flame

These blasphemous powers ! Lo, innocent men's
bones

Wound the dumb ground, and these protesting
stones

From smouldering desolation sue Thy name,

Inviolat Lord ! Avenge the virgin's shame !

Avenge Thy murdered peace, Thy martyrs'
moans !

Pursued

SPIRIT, pitiless, in pride apart,
Woe-bringer that but woe shall win,
Frail ravished soul and ravening heart
That fly the avenger mute within ;

Pursuer, evermore pursued
By pity, awful beyond hate,
More terrible than tortures rude,
To outmost life's last desert gate !

Against the sanguine-tinted morn,
Where slaughter stains the homeless street,
Behold !—the shine with One forlorn,
With pierc'd hands and nail'd feet.

With dripping sword, 'mid smouldering bricks
Of fanes your piteous rage defied,
Pursued, behold !—the Crucifix,
The broken heart, the bleeding side.

On hate's imperious tempest driven,
Without or respite, or delay,

Pursued

Blown onward, onward under heaven,
Alike the preyer and the prey,

Vain, invictorious victor, speed
O'er men befouled and blood-red sod !—
Still at your heart, with hands that bleed,
The Son of God, the Son of God.

Sad soul, the scorn of ravaged lands ;
Lone heart, that hears, and whirls away ;
Worn eyes, and weary desolate hands,
And crimson fingers knit to pray ;—

Ah, you that were a little child,
Dew-fresh from dreams of sky and flowers,
Who fly from woe to woe more wild,
Companioned by delirious hours,

The winds of hell shall fail, shall cease
To beat on time's disastrous shore ;
But nevermore shall you have peace,
Be pillowed painless any more.

You pause not for the virgin's cry ;
You halt not for the widow's moan ;
And naught shall stay you till you die
And face the pale sad Christ alone.

The Red, Red Dawn

And all the beauty you devour,
And all the blood your lips shall shed,
Shall speed with you to that hushed hour
Of torment 'mid the quiet dead—

The gazing dead—when all the slain,
The mighty humble as the meek,
Shall turn on you, with looks that stain,
In God's white hush where none shall speak.

Renaissance

1916

SPRING wins no cheer this year. Stern hearts,
for shame !

Saw ye not how by wilding ways she came
With flowers of foam and flame ?

Care ye not how by heathy moor-tops blowing
And copsewoods shy she came, ye grave unknowing ?

Ah ! you have heavy grief
Who find not love within her flower, not mercy in
her leaf.

Sing, poets, sing ! This is no time for moping,
When all the poet's world quickens with hoping,
And only knaves are groping :

Sing, poets, sing !

Earth, fair from tears of her late sorrowing,
Smiles to the bridal. Lyric homage bring
To love, the king !

Awake, O joy, O resolute joy awake !
For now the larks on dancing pinions strong

The Red, Red Dawn

Make heaven a maze of song ;
In every vocal brake
The snowy maythorns shake
Unto each dallying gale
Spindrift of bloom by down and comely dale,
Knowing the nuptial time
Is come, is come with riot of sweet rhyme.

Now by the osiered pool the staid swan sits ;
The heron in the cool fondles his amorous wits
Where, when the warmed gnats rise,
Sun-dazzled wagtails dart between two skies.
Cloud-bastioned castles scale with towers the sky,
And gleam like silver dungeons in the water ;
Breast upon breast glad earth and heaven lie,
Fond mother and fair daughter.
Oh lend the heart to mirth,
For love takes beauty home through all the earth !

Poets, awake ! the time of song is come.
The wild-ducks thread the reeds by tarn and lake ;
The bees all day are busy in the broom ;
And sturdy lambs with their own bleating shake ;
The throstles flute among the hazel covers
Where rosy sunsets wait for radiant lovers.
Poets, awake, awake !

Renaissance

The gossip cuckoo tells a jester's tale
 To every jocund vale ;
Glad echoes answer in the happy hills,
And ancient quiet far in leafy caves, mourning the
 daffodils,
Listens with love, and croons to the ferny dells
That story blown from joy-enchanted fells,
And the cuckoo-gossip stirs the azure bells
In glades all heaven with hyacinths. Now the rills
 With twinkling rests and rallies
 Through brambly wildernesses
 Throng to the happy valleys,
 To linger 'mong cool cresses
And undulant leaves of lazy water-lilies—
 That dream as idlers do
 Where time so very still is
 You seem to hear the dew,
And where, enzoned with heaven, sails faintly by
 That dream the dragon-fly.

Now children's voices range through haunted places,
And startled blackbirds scream ; with stealthy
 zest
The flower-wreathed brigands spy the hiding
 nest
 With wonder-lighted faces,

The Red, Red Dawn

Yet fear to spoil, so near has come the sky,
And all the living wood is like one watching eye.
Far heard among the dim, mysterious trees,
Whose roots are laved with white anemones,
A pheasant coughs and whirrs the woodland through,
And pigeons cutter and coo.
And all is song to singing hearts under the bridal
blue.

Now steal the violets to forgotten graves ;
Swift swallows dip their beauty to green waves
Of bowery streams ; in mossy orchard closes
Crowd pale primroses,
Like virgins pure in prayerful nunneries pining
For love 'yond earth's designing.
Daisies, that are heaven's favourites, far and nigh
Listening for lovers' feet, outstare the sky ;
And prescient of the wonder of their wings,
Proud dandelions, a resplendent train,
The gorgeous children of sun-radiant springs,
O'erflow the mead and gleam along the lane
Like Orient sheiks and kings.

Oh, beauty wells in song from feathered throats,
And pure delight paints all the wilding ways ;
But you are mute, ah ye of many thoughts,
With hearts that turn from praise :

Renaissance

There is a silence where was song before ;
A hush haunts dawn and sunset evermore ;
And yet a gladness startles and waylays
The loneliest sorrow ;
The winding woodbine at the mourner's door
Doth promise sweet to-morrow ;
To the shy heart of every wounded thing
Cometh the spring
With cresset and with coronal
And merry mystic madrigal.
Though youth and music pass, and beauty sighs
When gorgeous autumns fall,
Spring trips this way for ever, and man's eyes
Shall dance with the spirit of her festival,
And hearts still hear the faint far faery-call,
And with a dear surprise
Find earth half paradise.

You singing dead that sleep on many shores
Beneath kind grass and gently-waving flowers,
Your souls are Heaven's, your songs of joy are ours
Delight shall vainly knock at many doors ;
Yet beauty lives, and memories of fond hours
Soothe the lone heart, and loss at last retires,
And love grows friendly with life's new desires,
And finds its peace in beauty,
And lives with songful duty.

The Red, Red Dawn

Turn, all ye sad, toward joy ; from death's drear
prison

The world's wide hope is risen !

Sing, silent poets ! sing a gladsome song !

For happiness is strong.

Nor life nor beauty fails, and hope on splendid
wing,

The pursuivant of some diviner spring,

Retakes the sunlit summits of the world

With beauty, and with vision, and with power,

And o'er her dream down-hurled

Reshapes her heaven, and in her azure tower

Renews her wondrous hour.

Sing, pensive poets, sing ! The welkin rings

With a wild music, and the cloud-fed springs

On pinnacles that beckon to the morn,

O'er vales toward heaven forlorn,

Chant to the larch-filmed mountains' night and
noon,

Sing a glad psalm while love hath ears to
hearken :

So swift is joy, ev'n swift is grief, and soon

The shadows lengthen, and the gay days darken,

And chill grows passion's boon.

Renaissance

There comes an end to singing, May's sweet singing,
 To nesting-time and June,
Then crashing bells on marriage mornings ringing
 Will wake but memory's croon ;
Lone love may find no listener then under the
frozen moon.

'Tis song-time, sing ! Spring passes soon, too soon.
 Life stays not for our clinging ;
 Time sets no store on yearning ;
And love and joy are winging ;
 And youth hath no returning
 Under the sun and moon.
Life's bonus waits for laughter ;
 The years heed not repining ;
And all the vast Hereafter
 Is vague to man's divining ;
 Hale hearts are leal to June ;
 Lift, lift a loyal tune !

Sing, poets, sing ! Spring passes soon, spring passes
all so soon.

Though men have woe, grief still hath ending ;
And joy makes light of sorrow's sending ;
And youth Heaven's whisper overhears,
 Youth with th' enchanted tears,
The cherubim his peers,—
Brave youth ! that forward gazes

The Red, Red Dawn

Through all the heart's defeats, the spirit's
 hazes,
That feels through sorrow to the magic years,
And sees Elysian glory in the skies,
Earth rare with wonder-bursts of Paradise !
Oh, royal youth, with radiant rapture wise,
 Sing ere spring dies !
 Song is the light in victory's eyes,
 And pity's dream, and love's surprise :
Oh, lyric youth, arise !
 With song's serene obeisance
 Salute the world's Renaissance !

A Hymn of Honour

1916

I

GREAT influences are round us : anguished
cries

And pæans victorious flung from valiant dust
Thrill the tense air. Calm death-undaunted eyes
Haunt ours ; and come pale agonies august
From places dread where man's stark soul stands
lone,
In its frail house of shuddering flesh and bone,
Not to be overthrown.

II

We have come through tribulation unto light,
And out of time strain toward eternity ;
Strong in the faith that this our right is Right,
And this shall stand while man, through Christ,
is free.
Not all the blood-red fangs of ravenous might,
Leagued with confederate forces of the night,
Shall dim this faith or doom this constancy.

The Red, Red Dawn

III

Honour to them that left the genial day,
The green tranquillity,
The quiet farm, the cottage by the bay,
The humming city's friendly cope of gray,
Sweet home's fond pleasantry,
To follow sorrow by the sanguine way
To wastes of victory.
They heard the whisper each heart understands,
Out of the ages, gentle as a flower ;
They exalted pass toward one calamitous hour
To do a God's commands,
To break Hell's bars of steel and brazen power
With bleeding human hands.
Honour all these who, drawing quiet breaths,
Wear the bright haloes of their coming deaths ;
Who, by the mystic law by men forgot,
Touch splendours that stir tears and know it
not.
Oh, for this love that gives up love and ease
To battle for the soul's mute sympathies,
For lives made strong by sweet simplicities
To radiant ends in far-off centuries,
Honour all these !

A Hymn of Honour

IV

Honour to all that 'twixt the moving sky
And waters their lone loyal watches keep,
That, wearying not, along the changeless deep
Midnight and noon unchanging journeys ply ;
Honour to these that, far from human eye,
Patiently speed where dangers never sleep,
That down in watery glooms to peril leap,
And, far from glory, die.

V

To them, that on their dangerous mission press
Pinioned amid inhuman loneliness,
Honour, ——to them that beat in dizzying flight
To their great tasks with no man's help at call,
That soar to triumph in empyreal light,
Or, like a death-struck eagle in the height,
Huddled, down the sheer gulfs fall.

VI

Honour to them that, silent and sublime,
With lonely hearts keep vigil evermore,
Whose eyes watch still from shore to dimming shore
The mighty movements in the maze of time,

The Red, Red Dawn

Whose thoughts are fleets and armies, and whose
dreams
Are thunderous battles joined in east or west,
Whose nights are empires to the mind's unrest
And lit with baleful gleams :
Ah, cruel-calm, how cruel-calm fate seems
To great souls, risen at stricken time's behest
To rule and save, so mighty, so unblest.
What pity dims those stern and steady eyes ;
How drags the heart when the swift course is
set ;
When hopes grow proud what hushed and humble
sighs
Wound the staunch will, and steep the hope's
just prize
In tears of vain regret :
Ah, brave leal lives, so lone in all unease!
Honour to these, all honour unto these

VII

Honour to him who, in the northern sea,
At the chill meeting-place of all the ways,
Dropping this earthly tumult suddenly,
Met the great silence at the end of days,
And, with his simple human majesty,
Took death with steady gaze.

A Hymn of Honour

VIII

Honour to all in peril or in pain
Who make no terms with evil, but sustain
The right dispassionately for all men's gain.
Honour the meek, whose lives with prayer's en-
deavour
Follow their loves—whose home-fond feet shall
never

Come home for ever.

Honour the dead, and them that slowly die ;
Honour ourselves ; and honour still the gleam
That lives in all men's hearts, whate'er they seem,
That move uncaring 'neath the comely sky.
Honour this land that, 'mid a world's downcasting,
Yields unto death her love's irradiant flower,
That, grieving, took with pride her tragic hour,
True to the Everlasting.

IX

Oh, Thou, to Whom all honour is, to Whom
Strange deaths and births are subject ceaselessly,
Unto the goal of days under the gloom
Sustain Thy servants in their agony,
These living lamps that, steadfast, burn from
Thee
'Mid war's wild dark and doom.

The Red, Red Dawn

Close the sick ears of them that slew—and slay

In dreams delirious many nights and days.

Shut the sad eyes of them that walk to-day

In Golgotha, and cannot turn away,

But gaze, and gaze, and gaze.

Oh, Thou, Who on all life's battle-thundering
coasts

Art lord of ghostly hosts,

Judge not the blind words Thy rude heroes cry

In the red hour of death, for under heaven

Drawn down the days or driven,

As torments chase or fly,

The soul hath various tongues, and rash and wild

Is earth's bemazëd child,

And darkly wins his way

Unto Thy lighter day.

Oh, Thou, Who lent to death Thy deity,

Pity Thy brave that hie

Less meekly to the throes of Calvary,

That, weak with anger, cry

Crudely beneath the sky.

Who die for love, unfearful of the price,

And for a dream fling all the earth away—

These touch diviner issues. Say not Nay

To Thy rude saints in their self-sacrifice.

A Hymn of Honour

X

Ye true that stand in conscience sternly strong,
That work, and watch, and wait, and hope so long,
Keep silence cheerful ; yea, with zeal endure ;
Pursue the quest with purpose proud and pure.
And you, grown grave, that, pale with sudden sorrow,

Wait life's more mute to-morrow,
Weep patiently, yea, suffer to end
With royal patience. He hath fate for friend
Who, faithful, follows the eternal lure
In his own soul, whose loves are that high brood—
Faith, wisdom, temperance, mercy, fortitude.

XI

To Heaven be praise, Whose cause in honour stands,
For shining hearts, and sad and eager hands ;
For lives, that moved on soft luxurious floors,
That bravely break on adamantine doors ;
For heads that knew but down, that sleep on
stones ;
For delicate feet that speed where anguish moans ;
For lips, that feigned and sighed with languid
breath,
That sing the soul's defiance fronting death ;
For hearts waxed swift to feel ; for pitying ears ;
For life grown lovely through our tears, our tears !

Hymn of the Airman in the Hour of Battle

UP, and upward, soaring, soaring,
Lift our battle to the skies !
In this world of light the roaring
Of the temporal tumult dies.
Winged from time, we strive together ;
Past the wind's last wave we run,
Climbing up the gleaming weather
Toward the radiance of the sun !

Swung afar, your guns have spoken :
Little flecks of white between
Lie like wool on blue unbroken
O'er the earth—a mist of green.
Round and round, and sunward ever,
You the lustrous, I the free,
Lured to death by life's endeavour,
Soaring 'mid immensity.

Winged at length, the royal ranger
Beats his passage through the skies !

Hymn of the Airman in the Hour of Battle

Man from danger unto danger
Fares beyond-ward, wanton-wise,
Seeks a goal through all betiding,
Flings the void his fleeting breath,
And with rapture riding, riding,
Takes the starry way to death !

Earth beneath us, planets o'er us
Wheeling, wheeling out of view ;
Constellations speed in chorus
As we circle, I and you,
Lone 'mid grand creation's story.
Through the vastness not a cry.
Poised for battle, in the glory
We are seraphs ere we die !

Past the toils of time our flight is ;
In the proud ascent we plod,
Where the heights' untainted light is
Breathless in the gaze of God.
Here our quarrel and our questing
End—but nearer to the sun.
Sternly at the last the testing
Comes to all that man hath won.

Brave men strove and died before us,
But we strive in fields profound,

The Red, Red Dawn

Far above the star that bore us.
In the vastness not a sound.
Only here your shell-bursts under
Spread and fall like fiery rain,
With the gun-smoke's silver wonder
Idle on an azure plain.

Nearer to the sun, my foemen !
I above, and you below,
Swung o'er the abyss, where no men
Venture, neither tempests blow,
Silent . . . Poising in the splendour,
Passionate with mortal breath,
Sweeps my soul, with no surrender,
Down the deep to you—and death !

Ruin-kist, but gamesome ever,
Proud we meet amid the blue :
Who shall speed the world's endeavour
Splendid foemen, I or you ?
Here we crash : the great downcasting
Waits. May weal us all betide !
Buoyant with the Everlasting,
Lords of death, we ride—we ride !

The Hymn of the Atom

I AM not dazzled by the vast
Who am far sprung from all the past ;
For all that is in earth and sky
Is mixed within this little I
In such proportion as doth make
Myself my self without mistake.

A dewdrop on the morning hills
May flood a dale with daffodils ;
A thought through silence winged afar
May flash, a deed, on some lone star ;
The eons wait, or bond or free,
On moments of humanity.

Great God, how awful is Thy small :
Thy all in each, Thy each in all.
Thy thoughts how long, my days how fleet,
O Thou—my head, O Thou—my feet,
My hope, my heaven, my earth, my sky,
My birth, life, death, my all and I.

The Red, Red Dawn

Container of the dark and bright,
Dim not Thy tiny point of light ;
O make me as Thy perfect note
That issues through the spring bird's throat ;
Let one aspiring harmony
Make glad Thy little bird and me.

In Memoriam

Field-Marshal Lord Robert

LET the drums roll. He had a stainless soul
Our hoary hero with the child-like heart :
He passes hence and leaves with man no smart,
No wound that festers from a wrong of his :
Unsullied by a hundred victories
He goes with honour to the silent goal.

Let the flags droop, for lowly lies the brave.
He strove for one that might alone could save,
The helpless angel with the heavenly brow,—
Peace. Scorned was his plea : and Peace bleeds,
 prostrate now,
 And he goes to his grave.

Blest is the patriot who is sternly just
With wisdom that doth hold the years in trust ;
Who in the moment sees the centuries,
And serves the future with the strength that's his
With single truth and purpose, scorning ease ;
Who, housed with folly, will not deign disguise
His judgment for his comfort, but applies

The Red, Red Dawn

His kingly conscience to the prouder prize,
And staunchly stands against his day's disdain,
In patience and in pain,
Honoured by his own heart, pure patriot—though
in vain.

Follow the dead with thoughtful ministry ;
Mourn for the stainless patriot : this was he.

Let the drums roll. Our soldier-sage is sped,
The tried, the tender, and the stubborn-true.
A wind of memories stirs the martial dead,
And Roberts stands with Nicholson anew,
With Outram, Havelock, and the mighty few :
And, " What of Cawnpore when the night was
red ? "

And, " Where the flag that over Delhi flew ?—
When in the dark the dreadful rumour grew,
And friend sought friend and, finding, found a
skull ? "

" Hath India peace ?—India, the wonderful,
India, our care, our mystery old and new ! "
And later fields are scanned, and deeds on lonelier
heights :

The sinuous marches under Afghan nights,
War-worn toward drear Kabul,
Through cruel mountains jagged, with each
weird star

In Memoriam

Red as a spear-wound ; and the echoing fights
In barren passes wild toward Kandahar.—
Fond hope, that in this world, where nought is vain,
Dead heroes touch their natal star again,
And smile on triumphs past and ancient pain,
On deeds in days when time was silver tongue
Sang, and the heart was young.

Let the drums roll ; and toll the passing-bell :
Our hero home is riding, resting well.
Toll for the gentle and the unbeguiled.
He, who was battle's blameless overlord,
Offered to Death a palm-branch, not a sword :
Cheering the brave he passed, and, having smiled,
Slept like a guileless child.

Happy the soldier who not lightly serves
His country, and whose service never swerves
From justice ; who in all his labour is
Not party's servant but humanity's ;
In toil severe, in tenderness renowned ;
Alike by follower and by foeman crowned
True man in valour, wisdom, charity.—
Mighty in failure, meek in victory,
Leave him, the grandly simple. Such was he.

Gone

THE winds are laughing in grass and tree ;
Blithe waters high in the hills rejoice :
But sad is the laughter, and poignant the glee,
For the voice of one dead, that I no more shall see
'Neath the leaves and the stars, is calling to me
In waters and winds. Oh voice,
Haunting the world, go by, go by !
Too fond, too fair show the love-lit years ;
To listen is loneliness under the sky ;
Go by, go by
A heart that echoes a phantom cry,
A throat that is aching for tears. . . .

The path to the crag that we used to climb
Winds up through the haze of the sunset gold.
'Twas thus we sat in the dead year's prime
Here by the lorn sheepfold.
And never again till all discords chime,
And dead men wake at the death of time,
Shall I touch your hand and hold.

Gone

Are you lonely there in the flat lands now

Where your ears and eyes are shut to slaughter?

Do you long for the shade of the pine-tree bough?

For the sound of the mountain water?

Do you dream of the nooks where the primrose
dwells,

And the orchis grows by the meadow streams?
Dream of the croon of the Sabbath bells

In solemn spots on the summer fells,

Where hide the mountain asphodels?

Are you sad for home in dreams?

For I feel a plaint as of one in pain

Go over the leaves, and the silence fills

With a green regret, as I climb again

The last lone curve of the well-loved lane

In the arms of the thoughtful hills.

Are you lonely there in the flats afar,

Where no hill streamlets hail each other

Through the hush that comes with the evening
star?

Are you lonely, quiet brother?

Ah, it's home you would be among hearts you
know,

'Mid the cosy farms, and the fond shy places,

Where proud clouds over the grave tarns go,

Where the buzzards wheel, and the white winds
blow

The Red, Red Dawn

Over brave sky-islēd spaces.

It's at home you'd be laid among homely graces,
'Mid fields more friendly than human faces,
Where the flowers of childhood grow.

It's lone I'll be too when the lone spots call,
Where by meres moon-haunted the owls are
hooting ;
'Neath the yews' live gloom by the waterfall
Under nights where meteors are shooting.
Ah, lone 'twill be there on the sheep-tracks now
Winding up and up in the great blue weather ;
Lone, lone on the moor, though my heart knows
how
A dead man smiles in the heather.

Spirit removed, are you far or near ?
For my heart is glad with a chill sweet fear :
Do you come to me
With a sudden glee ?
Do you speak what I cannot hear ?

Which is the dead of us ? You or I ?
So much you have left behind
To startle me in the earth and sky,
To woo me in wave and wind :

Gone

So much from the day
You have taken away
That I pace old paths like a life astray ;
I listen, surprised at your foot's delay,
You come, but I cannot find.

Ghostly voice, I can hear you still
Sue in the wind. Sue low, sigh low !
A ghost I come to a phantom hill
From a life lived long ago.—
Yester-year, to thought how dear,
To love so poignant-sweet and near,
But, ah, what worlds from here !

Voice from the wonderful, plead no more.
(Lone are the lips that are hushed of death.)
Love was lovely, and love is o'er,
And all that was is a beauteous breath.
Call no more.
Come in the stillness nigh to death,
Then, through the mist, with immortal breath
Call once more.

England Once More

WE live in large and glorious days, and strive
For grand and gracious ends. Man's spirit
towers

Titanic o'er the mirk of mundane hours,
Confirmed in strength. 'Tis great to be alive !

Brave on this hurricane of time we drive
Through pain and peril, and in league with
powers

Mightier than death, and in a cause not ours
But vaster—for whose weal the stars survive.

Now let all meanness perish. Life august
Calls. Man is conscious of the destiny
Of man, and, set in starry constancy,
Holding a world's enfranchisement in trust,
Moves to his goal, imperial from the dust,
With purpose proud toward immortality.

To Our Great Dead

WITNESS, ye splendid Dead that, gravely
great,

Above the tumult and the mists of days
Beckon the ages, that, o'er all dispraise,
Triumphant dwell, the potent peers of fate ;
Not all unworthy we, your sons, though late,
To follow glory by the bitter ways—
We from the sloth of infamous delays
Risen, and from slumbers meanly fortunate.

We had not wholly fallen who can rise
To this high mandate. Not 'neath heaven in
vain
Perished our brave, nor passed thought's starry
train,
With futile splendour through these human skies :
We rouse, and sternly, with undazzled eyes,
Follow the glory still through death and pain.

Prices and Profits

SHAME not the land the patriot adores ;
Nor weigh mean gold 'gainst gifts no price
can buy ;

Nor batten, in the days when heroes die,
On lives that vainly wait at lowly doors
Their loves—that fall for England. Vales and tors
Enjoy th' unstinted largesse of the sky ;
And the great mother till her breasts be dry
Suckles her oceans on a thousand shores ;—

Then who are they, got of a baser brood,
Who, plotting, stint the hero's darlings' bread ?
Who bend more earthward the lone widow's
head,
And grasp their gain, and have not gratitude
Toward England's generous poor ? Great God !
how crude
Are they that, shameless, wrong th' ungrudging
dead !

Man's Immortality in Nature

MAN is the master of things,
In the bounds of his nature free :
But, be he the pride that an Empire sings,
To the green at the last comes he.
He shall lie in the cool where the shadow clings,
Where rest the song-bird's weary wings,
While sunsets pass like splendid kings,
Safe under the greenwood tree.

Man's soul hath height at his will ;
The depth of man is profound ;
But earth must hush at her heart his ill,
And cleanse his dreams in the ground,
Must fondle him long—she will not kill—
Safe shall he lie 'neath a calm green hill
Where the harebell nods and the daffodil
Soothed by a leafy sound.

Man gathers him weal or woe :
Or priest, or warrior he,
Be he lover high, or leper low,
By way of the land or sea

The Red, Red Dawn

He shall come in a far spring's ichorous flow,
In a thousand patient years or so,
Come with a memory from long ago,
To the leaf of a greenwood tree.

And if he be greatly clean
In ten thousand years on an hour
His white soul, safe with the woodland green,
Remembered of sun and shower,
May steal to the place where his love hath been
And gladden the winds in a sylvan scene
In a jocund June, where the bee's lips lean,
At the heart of the hawthorn-flower.

And, learning a mystical word
In the code of the Deity,
'Neath the moon in the trill of a bird
His essence shall float and be free,
Shall wake where the dew is stirred,
Shall hear what no man hath heard—
The wonder in peace deferred
Where the trees have sanctuary.

Though a man be lord of his race,
And mighty to bind and to free,
He shall come in a time to a quiet place
Where the flesh and the dust agree :

A Windy Morning

He shall peer from Nature's face,
He shall gather the greenwood's grace,
And bide for a gentle space
At the heart of a greenwood tree.

A Windy Morning

WIND tousles all the whistling corn ;
Hares frolic in the meadow ;
O'er swinging woods this streaming morn
Go tumbling shine and shadow.

Peewits are toppling down the sky,
Each bird a lusty liver ;
The haygrass, flecked with lights that fly,
Is flowing like a river.

Earth like a fledgling longs for wings ;
And, caught in wide commotion,
My heart is like a ship that swings
Upon a swinging ocean.

And every sense takes up the tune
Of birds and clouds and grasses ;
My mind is merry as a moon
That peeps when darkness passes.

The Red, Red Dawn

Sweet odours chase the revelling gale,
Fleet fancies riot after ;
The flying horns of elfland hail
A rout that follows laughter.

A cuckoo flings a magic note,
Then hiccups twice for folly,
As though the laughter in his throat
Is mocking melancholy.

Dear God, O give us lips for joy,
And limbs that spurn the tether,
A heart in age to play the boy
And dance in Thy blithe weather !

The Love-Call

1915

LADS, fall in, for the games are over ;
Storm on the day-dream whirls at last ;
Home from the earth-rim hastes the rover ;
Rich to the present speeds the past.

Boys that roamed through the fern and heather,
Raced in the wind where the wave-flakes flew,
Mates of the morn, that shared together
Haunted days under happy blue,—

Field-men, foam-men, wood-men, fur-men,
Men of the prairies, and mountaineers
Answer now to the dreams that stir men,
Born afar in the nestling years.

Over the seas in desert places
Lone men stand by the ford and fold,
The dusk grows misty with leaning faces,
Homeland faces in times of old.

The Red, Red Dawn

Struck is the tent by the great west water ;
The gold is left in the mountain mine ;
For the love-call came in days of slaughter,
And the hut is lorn by the forest pine.

Stillness reigns in a wild hill-station
Where the rock-ragged noon is cooled with snows ;
The moon-wan plateau of desolation
No more the Sahib's footstep knows.

Left is the ranche mid plains unbounded ;
A night-gleam's gone by a palm-fringed sea ;
There's a hush at eve, where a song had sounded
In a latticed house by a lemon tree.

Home they come, for their love remembers
Lights that shone over English loam,
Fond tales told in the dim Decembers
Round the fire on the hearth at home.

Here are lads from the grey, grim places,
Hard from toil under hurtling skies ;
Lads from the breathless, golden spaces,
The hush of the sun-dream in their eyes ;

Lads that strode on the world's proud highways ;
Lads from the turbine, lads from the till ;
Pensive lives from the shy, still byways ;
Pale, brave boys from the forge and mill ;

The Love-Call

Sons of sorrow, and heirs of splendour ;
Rich men, poor men, merged at last,
Schooling the will to the proud surrender,—
England's own go marching past !

Every man has a friend for neighbour,
Every lad has a love that's true :
Motherland, Loverland, yours their labour,
These are the sons that you never knew !

Leal men all, with their deeds for token.
Fondled now by the Mother's hand,
Men, whose ardours the years had broken,
Glow to the dawn-light. Such shall stand !

True to the boy that the man remembers,
True to the beauty by time beguiled,
To the April-spirit in old Decembers,
When the stern-faced man was a tender child,—

Parson, ne'er-do-weel, writer, and drover,
Mere-men, moor-men, lads forth-cast,
Big men, little men, rooster, and rover,—
England's own are marching past !

Lads, fall in ! for the old Land's calling,
Motherland, Loverland, war-oppressed ;
Lives that love us are loyally falling,
Doughtily, cheerily, England's best !

The Red, Red Dawn

Proud from the promise of days departed,
One for the splendour,—one at last !
Memory-haunted, and Titan-hearted,
England's lovers are marching past !—

Arms a-flash to the sun for token,
Feet that leap to the pipe and drum,—
These, when beautiful peace was broken,
Sang o'er the pennoned storm, “ We come ! ”

Something's gone from the sunset glory ;
Something flown from the homestead tree :
But a deed is writ in a deathless story,
And a rapture rides on the English sea !

There's zest to-day in the winds and waters,—
In pride of loving their hearts know why,
These lingering wives and sad-lipped daughters,—
England's heroes are marching by !—

Each free man is a soldier-lover,
Lit with a dream that his sons shall stand
Free men still while a wailing plover
Dips in flight over English land !

The Private's Wife

THERE'S a brave light on the moors to-day,
The gold's aglow in the green ;
But there's never a gleam in my heart's grey,
That's sad with the things unseen.
The men go, and the wives stay,
And there's sorrow between.

I feel the live thing move in me,
And, fearfully unalone,
I dumbly wait for my time to be,—
For the birth of a soul unknown ;
And, oh, for your word, lad, while I wait !
For your step at the garden gate !

The dead leaves flutter a-by the door,
And the black pines grieve at night ;
And there's no one comforts me any more
In the dusk or candlelight ;
And the strange west glows with a terrible red ;
And the dawn's like a soldier dead.

The Red, Red Dawn

I turn in the dark to an empty place,
And the rain-gust bites at the glass :
And “ It’s far,” think I, “ to your kindly face,
My man, where the shell-shrieks pass.”
And the hoot of an owl in the fir-copse nigh
Strikes cold like a shot man’s cry.

It’s nothing to *you* the rush of the rain
And the wail of the wind in the tree ;
But I live lone in the ways of pain
With the man that I cannot see ;
And with each shrill breath an unseen death
He dies at the heart of me.

It’s nothing to *you* when the dead things leap,
And the whistling gale grows higher ;
But there is a dumb thing haunts my sleep,
Wide-eyed, with its mouth in the mire ;
And streaming death with crimsoning breath
Shrills past like a wind of fire !

Oh ! it’s nothing to *you* in the world, no doubt,
When the moor-wind cuts and sears,
When the woods like galloping armies shout—
That crash upon shivering spears !
And the cruel hush when the storm’s gone by
Ne’er grinds your heart to a cry !

The Private's Wife

To die oneself is an easy thing,
To slip under grass and lie
In the humble ground 'neath the song-bird's wing
And the gently stirring sky :
It's bearing that's hard, when the hope's unfed
And the live heart feels the dead.

" It's silly," I say to myself, " to bide
With fear that's frost in the blood
While the brave man waits on the wild hill-side
To do what a brave man should " :
So I get me down to my turn once more,
To tidy and dust as before.

The hope of the sad is a long, long hope ;
The fear of the lone is wide.
Sometimes with a blinded mind I grope
To weep at my own hearth-side.
" 'Tis sin," I'll say, " to repine alone
Till grief's like moss on a stone :

" Maybe he'll come—if he comes at all—
Maybe he'll come to me
When the cuckoo-birds in the stack-garth call,
And the bloom's on the apple-tree,
And sit him there by the sunset wall
With the little one on his knee."

The Red, Red Dawn

I'll start, and list for the garden gate
Till himself or his ghost appears ;
For the best or worst comes soon or late
To all in the wandering years.
And little, maybe, is man's hate,
Are woman's tears.

The Man that was Dead

DIM faces, grieving eyes
Through a mist inclined to me :
A little noise of sighs
Like a wind passed quietly ;
A drifted whisper came, " He dies."—
Far off it seemed to be.
Then an inrush as of many skies ;
Then sudden calm, so cool, so wise.
Calm, too, my soul—beyond surprise,
Calm with eternity.

The shadow of the yew
Lay grotesque upon the floor ;
A drowsy murmur grew
From the church-chimes ; came the coo
Of the pigeons as before.
Mid the quiet green and blue
Quiet, quiet I, who knew
That my body lived no more.

They seemed so near, so far,
The common day's affairs ;

The Red, Red Dawn

The clock familiar

Tick-tacked upon the stairs.

I felt my mother's prayers
Steal Godward from a star.

They wept who yet could weep :

A wonder mine, the thrill
Of Being, strange and deep.

Calm, wholly calm, my will.
Time seemed a dream in a sleep,
And death a ripple of ill
That had trembled and was still
Upon a glassy deep.

I turned from grief away :

The newly dead but say
To love a fond, Good-day ;
And with a blither sorrow
Bid life, Good-morrow.

My body, flesh and bone,

Haunted the ghost of me :
The man that I had known
Was more than memory,
His flesh and bone, his flesh and bone
Clung yet to me as though my own,
Alone, yet strangely unalone,

The Man that was Dead

Dim with mortality,
I came to a still place ;
My footfall made no sound.
Each gray bough, mute as a dead dream's face,
Hung in the hush profound :
So still it was I heard in space
The worlds go round and round.

I paused like a guest unbidden :
An awed content was mine :
I stood, like a nun close-hidden
With the Whisperer divine,
And listened : no voice of the body stirred,
Nor did *soul* utter a word.

I listened : time from me fell
Like a shadow silently :
I heard my own death-knell,—
But I was the light in the tree—
The wandering gleam on the fell—
The toll of a blue harebell
In the green grass under me.

My *self* like a shade withdrew :
And somewhere God had stirred :
The earth was a life that knew,
The sky a spirit that heard ;

The Red, Red Dawn

And I was the flash in the dew,
The lilt of its love in the bird,
And the sea's long wonder-word :
The fullness of life flowed through me—through
Like mind through a conscious word !

And that which was dim grew clear,
And that which was dark lay known :
There was nor There, neither Here :
The many were one alone.
Spirit was I with an immanent ear
At the naked core of life,—more near
Than intimate blood and bone.

Outcast at a scorn-slammed door
I sobbed, the virtue that fell ;
Pale-lipped on a palace floor
I shrank at a marriage bell ;
I smiled, a King whom the plaudits tore ;
I laughed in a maniac's cell ;
With bliss that from heaven to heaven did soar
One, and with woe that evermore
Shudders from hell to hell :

And I was the hate that flew
Through life from a Kaiser's mouth,

The Man that was Dead

That slew, and slew, and slew
To ease my lust of drowth.
And I was the mother's woe,
And the raped maid's terror wild,
And the purity, like God's new snow,
In the eyes of a little child.
All births in all things born was I,
All deaths in all that die.

I moved with bodiless things
That wait in procreant gloom ;
Felt Being's bubbling springs,
The murderer start in the womb ;
I was pity pale that in darkness clings
To the cloudy skirts of doom,
And the prescience of the bloom
That in desolation sings.

I looked through time, and saw
The years in the folded hour ;
Saw thought to her purpose draw
The wandering winds of power ;
Saw pinioned centuries gnaw
Pride's splendid mortal flower ;
Saw fearful shapes that lower
'Mid yeasty worlds and cower
To the Will that is the Law.

The Red, Red Dawn

And I was the soul of place,
And the fire in the eagle's eye ;
And, pinnacled far in space,
I felt the sea-things die :
A thought in the bland eternal Face
I lingered, even I.

I had no human pain ;
It seemed not strange to be
As merciful as summer rain,
As free as a wind on the sea,
To flash in soul and to attain
All knowledge instantly,
To know in all eternity
No moment void or vain.

Through ether shimmering white
From realms like a sunset-flame
The hymn of the day and night
Like wizard wonder came ;
I saw the suns in quiring flight
Circle like song-birds in God's sight,
Lauding His marvellous name
Who leads all stars aright.

Safe in that heart I lay
Whose pulse is night and day. . . .

The Man that was Dead

A sudden blurr of pain ;
A thunder as of strife ;—
And a live man turned in vain
From the terror and the stain
And the mandate that was Life. . . .

Ah, wonder wide to view !
Ah, spirit-life that stirred,
That caught at God nor knew ! . . .
I have both seen and heard
A truth too brightly true
To be dimmed by a mortal word :
The river of life flowed through me—through,
Like song through the heart of a bird !

The Wild White Rose

I WALKED with aimless steps apart,
Through meads with sorrel red,
With battles in my haunted heart,
And in my mind the dead.

Along the wonted ways I went,
Where leaves made gentle noise,
Into the wood of old content,
Nor felt the woodland joys.

In vain the moss caressed my feet,
The boughs were kind in vain ;
I only knew the past was sweet
To good men dead with pain.

While there, a prey to wandering woes,
My half-oblivious eye
Was startled by a wilding rose
That gazed into the sky.

It had no sorrows for its own,
No haunting fear or care ;

The Wild White Rose

Lone in the greenwood it had grown,
To die in beauty there.

No burthen at its birth was given ;
On it the task was laid
To memorise the light of heaven
With meekness in a glade.

And there, indeed, it seemed to me,
Some fond, mysterious power
Touched with a shy felicity
My spirit from the flower.

Man's anguish brushed me like a wing.
I turned away my head.
That white rose was a gladsome thing,
But ah ! the dead—the dead !

Hospice

1914

I TURNED from the red of the tempest, from
the rage and the rapine of strife,
And went by meek green ways where was neither
wrath nor roar :
And the woods came close as of old with a ques-
tioning hush, and my life
Felt, and was shamed by the peace, and was
angry no more.

For heavy with time was my spirit, and burthened
with impotent grief
For the sadness of men, and subdued with a
stern and a sterile dismay ;
For the hopes of a world were as dew on a drifting
and north-ravaged leaf,
And its loves were as blossoms on water that
winds waft away.

Hospice

Wide life in a ferment of passion surged under a
favourless sky ;
And the cursing and weeping of mortals distraught,
and the crowds of the dead
Companioned my days like a storm, and with torture
my ear and my eye
Heard and beheld. To the heart of the woodland
I fled.

There, there was no cry nor a voice ; there the
sound of the intaken breath
Seemed loud in that twilight of green under
azure all dreaming afar ;
There my being was hushed as a spirit that wonderingly
wakes after death
And listens in awe through the stillness star calling
to star,

And listens, and gathers the light, and is no more
alone or afraid.

The wood like the love of a mother laid intimate
hold on me there :
In that passionless calm had I peace, I was folded
about with that shade
Like the heart of a saint that is folded of God in
a prayer.

The Red, Red Dawn

So quiet the leaves and the bracken ; yet the lichen
and fern on each bole
Seemed sensate, akin to my being the life in each
age-hoar tree ;
And the immanent silence said somewhat too deep
for all sound to my soul,
And deeper than mortal can measure its meaning
to me.

In the hush of the woodland I felt the immortal
immaculate Word
That ages spell darkly and die ere its marvellous
meaning is known ;
'Neath the trance of the trees, 'neath the dream
of the sky was a Presence that stirred
With blessing, that favoured the bough and that
fondled the bone. . . .

We are creatures for infinite ends, and are summoned to beauty and praise ;
From Nature we come, and to Nature are bounteously splendidly bond ;
Yet is she but the shade of the Power that appor-
tions the nights and the days,
Whose paths are through gloom and through
gleam—beyond and beyond.

Hospice

Of a moment a mortal is born, in a moment is mute
with the ground,
Like the beam in a pool he is gone, like the dew-
captured glint of a star,
And his quest is not here, nor his home, he is sprung
of a vast without bound,
To be spent with the dust, and to speed to a
splendour afar !

Yet, the lord of a moment, how rash, how wantonly
futile and wild ;
He strains at a planet, and wins not a world but
himself as before ;
The deeps to his soul send a voice, but he turns like
a petulant child
And impassions his heart with the bells of the
foam on the shore.

He gathers his armies to slaughter, they disperse as
the winds and the waves,
And their deeds are a dream or a darkness afloat
on the fluctuant hours,
They rage into quiet, and April returns with joy
to their daffodilled graves
Where the children forgetfully play with their
laps full of flowers.

The Red, Red Dawn

Oh, Presence, that dwells in the stillness, eluding
the wanton embrace,

We have clutched at the gleam with our hands,
and have followed the vision in vain,
And waste are the ways for our feet ; in a loud and
a perilous place

We are whipped by the whirlwind of lust, and
are parched with our pain.

From the hush and the heaven of Thy green, from
the patience and power of Thy peace,

Oh, touch us with that which abides, the eternal,
serene, and secure,

That is mute amid tempest, and pure o'er the shocks
of the passions that cease,

That to faith and to truth evermore is a light and
a lure !

Life's purpose in patience remains, nor through
man shall it stumble or fail.

Of mortal the sorrow is born, but Immortal shall
harken the cry,

And merge in the might of that purpose the means
that are foolish and frail,

Till sorrow be song to the uttermost arc of His
sky ! . . .

Hospice

I turned from the red of the tempest, the wrath and
the rapine of strife,
And stood in the meek green ways where was
neither rage nor roar ;
And the woods came close as of old with a question-
ing hush, and my life
Felt, and was shamed by the peace, and was
fevered no more.

To Italy

1916

A RECANTATION

I

I THOUGHT of you, Italia, with fond grief,
Like one who, waking, mourns a dream that
dies.

Upon your lips were wonders, and your eyes
Were soft with sunset sorrows past belief.
Vain loves, and splendours perilous, all things brief
And passionate yours, proud poets sadly wise,
And wonderful women dead 'neath glamour'd
skies,
You were a dream, Italia, and a grief.

I wronged you with a deep yet tender wrong,
Like one who loves, whose heart can only say :
“ I love her for her beauty's fragrant day,
For love's full summer rich with youth and song ;
The warm wild rapture of her love is long,
Long dead, and all the sweet hath passed away.”

To Italy

II

Oh, not in dead delight within the breast,
Not in dear glances, dimmed so long ago,
Not in fond hopes remembered, or the glow
Of ecstasy no more to be expressed,
Not, in romance, by death made manifest,
'Mid places grave where mists and memories
grow,
Is love, is living love, but in the flow
Of life to life, and in the onward quest.

I loved you for the sweetness of a dream,
And for the sadness of a grief of yore . . .
Italia!—on your mountains sheer and frore,
Victorious guardian, with stern eyes a-gleam,
Passionate, and young, and brave as morning's
beam,
Italia! risen to radiant life once more!

The Bramble Flower

AN August sun, and a random shower.
And I sat me down in a brambly place.
With a wonderer's eye a bramble flower,
Like a friend long lost, looked into my face.

I, startled, gazed with a vague surprise
At the beauteous blush and the core of gold.
Like a lover that looks in his lost love's eyes—
Grown kind with dreams from of old,

I looked in the face of that sudden thing
That beckoned to me like a magical star ;
And I seemed like a thought on volant wing
To follow a splendour afar.

The years were gone like the lilt of a rhyme ;
And a lost eve leapt to my life again ;
And the far fond notes of a Sabbath chime
Crooned in the heart of a mountain glen.

And one in the wonder bent and smiled
With a face benign 'gainst the sunset hills;

The Bramble Flower

And my father's hand caressed his child,
But nothing spoke save the whispering rills

Far off, like a silence feigning sound.

Through the riven cliffs the bright west broke,
Deep down, on a pinewood's somnolent bound,
That stirred in its dream like smoke.

Ah the world was rich with a love untold,
And witching-sweet with a joy half known.
And the great sun sank over woods of gold ;
And dear to the heart was each quiet stone.

Some lorn hill-water's troubled tune,
Muffled with peace in the heathy dells,
Came in the wake of a milk-white moon
Through the splendid calm of the aureate fells.

Oh, world in the gleam—so dear, so dear !
Ah, world in the gloom—how far, how far !
The roses crept to each reedy mere,
And a tarn was glad with the evening-star.

Too happy of soul for the tongue to say,
So close was heaven in that radiant hour,
The shy child turned in his bliss away
And kissed the face of a bramble flower ! . . .

The Red, Red Dawn

'Twas a joy gone by with the years long sped,
And forgotten of thought ;—yet the evening fills
A mountain land, and I sit with the dead
'Mid the hallowed sunset hills.

And I half believe what to-day denies,—
That each natural thing can lead and bless
The heart that loves it, can surprise
The soul with a loving consciousness.

In this secret world, however it be,
We feel the press of an unseen Power ;
Are touched as with immortality
By a simple bramble flower.

The Watchers

1915

SOLDIER, what of the battle
In the reek of the firing line ?
“ A hurtle, a whirr of the birds of hell,
A shudder of air, and a crashing shell,—
And my cold cheek’s warm for a dizzy spell,
Wet-warm with a red not mine.”

What when the brave recoil,
And the desperate stagger with scars ?
“ The draggled pride, and the grim despair,
The bayonet’s gride, and the sword in air ;
Then gore-smeared men that vacuous stare
Chalk-jowled at the genial stars.”

Soldier, what of the charge
Through the levelling wind of fire ?
“ A laugh on a face in eternity,
And a boy’s voice shrill with a blasphemy,
And the mother-name moaned plaintively,
And a prayer on the lips of a liar.”

The Red, Red Dawn

*Soldier, soldier battle-blown
In a rack-strewn world, where the mighty moan,
Brave in the blood, brave in the bone
Is a god's half-dimmed desire.*

What of your son, lorn mother ?
Of your husband, lonely wife ?
“ Of the end of mortal hath no man ken ;
And tears are common. The brave know when
It is time to die. Among humble men
There is little rest from strife.”

*Women that break, women that bear,
With the cross of grief, and the crown of care,
The lamp is lit on the altar there
For the sacrament of life.*

You in the gun-smoke hoar,
Captain, what of the fight ?
“ A hundred fall in the crackling gale,
A few win through, and a thousand fail,
And a God to the soul sends sudden ‘ Hail ! ’
When the red spurts out from the white.”

Of the hero left to bleed ?—
When the freezing death-step comes ?
“ A Victor speaks in the lone lad's ear

The Watchers

Of a foe well foiled, of a victory near,
And his spirit leaps with a phantom cheer
To the roll of unearthly drums."

*Captain true, captain strong,
Life is leal though battle be long.
So many notes to the single song
At the summit of all the sums.*

Sister, what of the flesh ?
Of the anguish of the breast ?
" A wince, a hush, then a tender hand,
A sleep, a dream of the old homeland,
Then the peace that none can understand,
Or the waking and the jest."

Sister, what of the *worst* ?
" God leans to the gentle ground ;
The birds have song, and the rills are sweet ;
And Nature, busy at head and feet,
Will make at her leisure all things meet
For the dust till the *soul* be found."

*Sister of light, to the drowned a dove,
All things work for a far remove.
The first is life, but the last is love ;
And God's foot makes no sound.*

The Red, Red Dawn

Surgeon, what of the maimed ?

Of youth made desolate ?

“ They watch their wounds with a rueful pride
Where body and soul sit side by side,
And chaff the horrors that life betide,
And hope, and have not hate.”

Surgeon sure, in the mazy blood

The worst is weak, but the best is good ;

And a hate o'ercome is a hell withstood :

'Tis a kiss that conquers fate.

Lord of the straining forces,

What of the war,—speak true ?

“ 'Tis the rush of hell to a 'wilderer day ;

'Tis the shock of the heights and depths asway :

'Tis the leap of the spirit, that spurns decay,

On death through a blood-red dew :

'Tis the riot of man's desire

'Gainst the Purpose darkly known ;

'Tis the hates that rise in a world half wise ;

'Tis a sea of grief and a storm of sighs

That dim with tears the seraphs' eyes

In the hush round the inmost throne.”

Marshal, lead, wisely lead.

The sorrows of time are sin's sad seed ;

The Watchers

*And the wrath of men shall red wrath breed,
For anger is God's alone.*

Priest of the Vision, say,

What have you seen afar ?

“ Mist : and beyond a supernal sight,
Limitless spaces of stainless light,
And a ray of truth through a rifted night
Whence the saints and the great dreams are.”

But of earth where the heart hath home,

Where strong men writhe and die ?

“ A God retrieves, and a God restrains :
The snows are white on the crimson stains :
Their dust shall have joy of the vernal rains
And the rose of the evening sky.”

But the grief of the body that bore ?

The hush of the home-sweet tongue ?

“ The griefs of the years are as winds on grass.
We touch the Promise, then we pass.
'Tis Heaven's fond smile through Time's *Alas!*
That keeps the world so young.”

He works His will in a myriad ways :

The Lord of Hosts is the Lord of Praise :

*He shepherds the nights, and He shelters the days,
Since His suns in the heights have swung !*

The Red, Red Dawn

Song in the shadow of sorrow,
 Laughter heard in the strife,
Hint of a marvellous morrow
 In the horrible night of life ;
Prayer sent up 'mid the thunder,
 Curse made meek with a kiss,—
God ! what a tangle of wonder
 In a complex world is this !
The living locked with the dying,
 And the victor weak with scars,
And foemen friendly lying,
 Soul-sad, 'neath the silent stars ;
The brave and afraid together
 Ensnared in a whirl of desire,
And swung into hell's red weather
 And a holocaust of fire.
On the ruin and the raging
 Fall the dews and tender snows :
The hushful heaven unaging
 Lets fall her sunset rose
On the war-worn and the weary,
 And the leaves a dream with them,
And through the gloaming eerie
 God trails His garment's hem ;
The brave remember with weeping,
 And speed with a jest to die ;
And, spent with war's red reaping,

The Watchers

Leal lovers dreaming lie.
After the woe of our waiting
Ah! what have the days in store,
When our hearts have done with hating,
And our loves come home no more?

*The sad shall have leisure for laughter,
The wild a hush-time for tears ;
Sweet boon shall be born hereafter
Of the travail of bitter years.
Life, swung in the great betiding,
Is spent as the sea-wave hoar,
And, one with the all-abiding,
Is broken evermore,
Is gathered unbroken for ever
And beaten of wind and tide
Of the world's august endeavour
Till God is satisfied.
The goal of life is vision,
The growth of mortal—strife ;
And a God that hath not derision
Is quick at the core of life.*

Earth

TREAD reverently on that dumb thing,
The ground : in secret there abides
All man hath been, all love-making
Of all the bridegrooms and the brides,
And all the perils and the prides,
And battles old, forgotten of fame.
'Tis mute so long, nor chafes, nor chides ;
It waits, and waits, and aches to sing.
Hush ! Since God, amorous, this way came
It labours with the hidden Thing—
With here a flower, and there a flame :
Watch, lest it lift a wing !

In February

I SEE my favourite sycamore
Is tipped again with conscious green :
The pigeons strut about my door,
And mutter and coo. In dazzling sheen,
Song-shaken, climbs a lark unseen.

The clouds in their own pleasure fly
Sun-chased across the windy blue ;
And all the jocund fields reply
With beckonings, as though winged too.
The magic compact lives anew.

There's mirth in every moving tree ;
Quick joy to peeping joy replies ;
The meadow's like a twinkling sea ;
And overhead are glancing skies
More bright than merry speedwells' eyes.

A venturous crocus, flouting blame,
Has heard the snowdrop's elfin chime,
And answers with an eager flame ;
And, catching hints of mating-time,
A blackbird calls in rippling rhyme,

The Red, Red Dawn

And sudden echoes toss the tale ;
 The orchard chuckles on the hill :
And, dancing by, a gipsy gale
 Teases my heart to trip and trill
 In haunts where soon the daffodil.

Grave winter, pack ! nor whine in vain :
 Youth leaps to youth, and bliss is spied :
Sweet love is at the heart again,
 A tempter not to be denied,
 And bridegroom signals unto bride !

Love's rarest songs are still unsung ;
 Life's richest wonder wakes not yet :
Come, April with the 'witching tongue,
 And whisper to the violet,
 And sweeten all the world's regret !

The Ballad of the Saucy *Arethusa*

THE saucy *Arethusa* came skipping up the bay,
With an air-fairy motion and a madcap way ;
“ A fine day for favours, boys,” with skittish mien
said she ;
“ Ho, breezes, blow a merry foe to match the mood
of me ! ”

The wind was tickling all the deep. Some mischief
lit her eye—
A speck against the azure day, she saw a cruiser lie !
With pretty nose she sniffed the air ; with “ That’s
the lad for me ! ”
She flew, for she knew ’twas her joy, the enemy.

And hardly had she run a mile to hold the game
and woo,
When far across the blowing deep upstarted number
Two.
She tossed her jolly curls, the coy and wicked minx,
with glee,
And said, “ I’ll be wed if I fail to favour three ! ”

The Red, Red Dawn

Oh, she was keen to coo, boys, and they were wild
to win.

The wind blew, the shells flew with kisses hot with
sin !

And such a flashing play of wit did sailor never see
As saucy *Arethusa's* when she whipped the enemy.

And now a gibe crashed over, a sultry jest went
wide,

And the virgin *Arethusa* with a telling tone replied.
Between the biting sallies was the taunt of witchery:
“ I tease you to please you, but keep my liberty ! ”

She was as wise a wench, lads, as ever rode a
deep ;

A gayer sprite, more lithe and tight, ne'er made a
wooer weep.

She took her wounds as beauty may, and volleyed
back with glee

Kisses for blisses to the sulky enemy.

Such ways had *Arethusa* to hold the game and play ;
So sharp her wit, from wounds of it her wooers ran
away ;

She whisked her tousled locks aside, and chased
them down the sea,

The beauty ! in duty to love and liberty !

The Ballad of the Saucy *Arethusa*

And more than once since then, boys, by blowing
bight and bay,

The pretty ship with saucy lip has had a word to
say—

The haughty *Blücher* knew it, for, “I’m hit at
heart!” said he

As he flew through the blue from the hoyden of the
sea!

But saucy *Arethusa* will ply her arts no more;

She’s parted from her company at Davy Jones’s
door;

And pertly, alertly, “Hail, Merrybones!” sung she,
And drank as she sank to her love the enemy.

If there’s a resurrection there’ll be resurrection
there,

And the shade of *Arethusa* will be shining in the
air;

For never living creature on any land or sea

Made truer vow, knew better how, to love an
enemy!

Victory

WE stuck to our ground like leeches :
 We knew we had got to die.
And out from the battered beeches
 They came like wolves at the cry.
And here a chum lay bleeding ;
 There a mess that was once a man—
Bah ! Something, life unheeding,
 Like hell through the mad heart ran !

The captain winked. “ Now ! Follow ! ”
 The rest the blood could feel :
There, challenging hell to swallow,
 We crashed with reddening steel !
The raucous throats grew husky ;
 Shrill breath and gurgling sighs
Floated to fields grown dusky :
 Our heels on dead men’s eyes,

We lunged amid wild grimaces,
 Air thick with the hot blood-smell ;
And, ah ! those flickering faces
 That eddied and sank in hell :

Victory

The devils and ghouls were busy !
Steel grided on bone ; you heard
Men yap like beasts, pain-dizzy,
But never a human word.

And never a plea was uttered ;
The slayer dropt mute by the slain ;
And here a revolver stuttered,
There a forehead flushed with a stain :
And oft, with his proud strength broken,
A hero sank on his knee,
While his eyes flung flaming token
To a foe that he could not see.

The rest is mist and a muddle . . .
With breast like a fire a-blaze
I turned with my face in a puddle :
Around was a dew-wet haze ;
The dawn-wind crooned in the clover,
And toyed with a slain lad's hair ;
A lark soared singing over ;
And I and the dead were there.

Over There

WIND from the Channel's reaching water,
Waft me the fragrance of English loam :
Sad I am with the scenes of slaughter,
Fond for the favouring hills of home.
Morn on the heath, and a curlew crying
Over there 'twixt the moor and sky ;
And an echo, far through the wide waste hieing,
Haunts my heart with a lonely cry.
Land where the fields have friendly faces,
Love of my dreams in sun and rain,
Vernal voices in old sweet places
Call me home with a joy that's pain. . . .

Rain in the trenches. *Here* men bear
Life with laughter, drop or dare,
Though May's in the world.—Ah, over *there*
Heathery hills and a blue day gleaming ;
A deep glen booms with an ocean's roar ;
Glimpsed for a moment a seamew screaming
Wheels and dives to an unseen shore.
There's a shy green lane, with the banks piled high,
Where hazels kiss in the glistening sky,

Over There

And gay primroses climb and crowd
To the azure zenith like a cloud.
Ah, joy amid leaves to loiter along
To the lilt of a stream and a linnet's song !
The breeze laughs in like a jester's story
With a sea-weed smell ; there's a lark in the glory ;
The wild-rose bursts, and the first May's falling ;
In a mist of boughs is a cuckoo calling,—
An echo faint, in the deep wood heard,
Asks at the heart, Is it dream or bird ?
There's a wet moss scent from a ferny gloom,
And the lone love-sigh of wind in the broom ;
Then a flash from far, and the heart's quick rise,
Leaps the blue to the brain with a hoiden glee !—
The earth swoops down from the shining eyes,—
And the sky sweeps up like a wing set free !
And the soul stands, stung with a swift surprise,
In the infinite face of the sudden sea ! . . .

England, Homeland, after the sorrow,
After the passion and all the pain,
Oh, may I wait life's last to-morrow
Where the sea laughs in on an English lane !
Over me proudly may gulls be flying
In a blown west, red to a loam-red lea ;
May a moor-wind, sad with a curlew's crying,
Croon o'er the mouldering bones of me !

A Hymn of Mercy

I

THEY come, they go, the broken and the brave,
Life's splendid scud flung from the thunder-
ing wave

Of agonist tides, that hold their purpose lorn,
Nor slumber ever though sad thousands mourn,
But beat unwearied to their wandering bourn.

II

Now may sweet mercy grow from hour to hour
And bless mankind as gentle dew the flower !
For life hath reached to splendour above price,

A glory won which shall not pass away :
Man's love, man's sorrow, and man's sacrifice,

How, how shall man repay ?

Oh ! let sweet mercy like a freshening wind
Blow through the land and hearten all mankind.

III

Mercy for them who move in darkling pain
About this beckoning world with eyes that hunger
in vain,

A Hymn of Mercy

Who hear the voices of the stirring day,
Song-rush at dawn, and sunset's roundelay,
Wind over flowers, and lilting rain on leaves,
And where shy blackbirds flute in gracious eves
Hear, very lonely, love's close-whispered words—
That heed the *blind* as little as the birds ;
Who touch the rose, and smell the bridal may
In copses known and loved, and turn with tears
 away ;
Oh ! unto these who have so bravely given,
So trepidant now at the friendly breath of heaven,
Fingering their steps through old familiar places
 With baffled, wistful faces,—
Mercy for these, if loss the heart can move,
 Mercy and love !

IV

To them that dreaming lie with inward eyes
Fixed on churned lands and thunder-passioned
 skies ;
That, with the horror-sweat, at terrors far,
Start in their dreams, and tremble at a star ;
Or breast a storm of foes, and wide are borne
Through phantom battles to the weary morn ;
That even in daisied meads at summer's noon
See death-wan faces drifting to the moon,

The Red, Red Dawn

And piteous friendless things that lie on grass
And plead for graves to all the winds that pass :
Unto these sad, that long in duress live,
Love's largesse give !

v

Pity the young, that from their father's door
Pass to the grief of ages with a smile,
To stare at death a weary wanton while ;
That home returning at length, with horrors hoar,
Smile youth's brave smile to meet the last sweet
mile,
But shall be young no more.

vi

For those who chased their joy with winged wills,
Whose blithe halloes made laugh each haunted
hollow,
Who hear the wind-blown trumpets of lorn ghylls
Send airy summons to their weight of ills,
Hear—turn—but may not follow ;—
Mercy for these whose feet must ever fail
Of summits cloudy-throned in spacious days,
Their intimate human burthen doomed to trail
Down lowly valley-ways.

A Hymn of Mercy

VII

For them that speak no more, that lie and lie
Knowing no pity for their mother's sigh,
 Their children's hunger-cry ;
Whose smiles elusive pass like vague regret
On sleeping faces touched with memories yet
Of inaccessible years and suns long set ;
For these, apart, so quiet in dreadful ease,
 Ah, mercy meet for these !—
That gave life's sovran light, who now can give
But of their dumb dark bane,—the dead that live.

VIII

Who shall repay, in years made desolate,
 The strong that did like shouldering Atlas
 bear
This world's effects, that strode breast-even with
 fate
And, smiling, flicked the bubble of despair,
That totter now 'neath heavy empty air,
 And only watch and wait ?
For all this loss, renewed from day to day,
 Who, ah ! who shall repay ?

The Red, Red Dawn

IX

Mercy and love for them whose eyes have seen
All woes that in the world have ever been ;
Whose steadfast souls have trailed through hell, and
cried
With all the tortures of Christ crucified ;
Whose tender hearts, made numb as frozen stones,
Have slumbered 'gainst their mangled brother's
bones ;
Whose generous hands for love have lustless slain,
And, clean of sin, have borne the blood-wet stain ;
Whose lips, where perfect mother-love hath clung,
Have thrilled with passion like a serpent's tongue ;
For these, in durance with a long regret,
Who have striven with hell lest earth a Heaven
forget,
For these that dared for righteousness be broken,
Who bore the mire of time for eternal token
That though man slay the flesh he shall not slay
The will to justice, nor by power dismay
God's conscience in this world, whose mandates roll
In tempests and in wars, and do control
Man's high and valiant soul !
For these, for these, if Heaven the heart can move,
Love ! human love !

A Hymn of Mercy

x

For all love's great renouncements, thankless made ;
For deaths unsung, and valorous deeds unpaid ;
For hearths made cold, and darlings meanly fed ;
For all our chilly justice to the dead ;
For pleas ignored, and hopes by silence riven ;
For all our rude omissions under heaven ;
For all the soul's betrayals that have stirred
The dormant dragon and the dastard word ;
For the cannon's blasting breath, the bayonet's
gride ;

For pierc'd heart, and lacerated side ;
For faithless plaint what time we share with Thee
This cruder Cross, this grosser Calvary ;
For these, for us, for all that use the sword,
Thy mercy, Judge and Lord !

Oh, Thou who art continuance and surcease,
Who watchest not the humblest will with scorn,
Not by our cross but by Thy cause release

This world from torments grievous to be borne.

Upon man's midnight waits Thy nobler morn.
Make just our power's increase.
Not in our *will* but in Thy Way is peace.

Affinities

Addressed to Certain Patriots with Fanatical
Minds

FORBID the tides to clasp the straining shores !
Prevent the marriage of the wave and moon !
Stay in their courses the great courier winds
That cheer the lonely moor-tops of the world !
Forbid the sun to shine, and mighty rivers
To keep their ancient compact with the sea !
When wind, wave, sun, enchanted by a cry,
Stand in mid-air in ever-frozen poise,
Then ban the gleam of Schiller's shining heart,
The ranging splendour of the mind of Goethe.
Stay the young spring at winter's callous heel !
Curb summer's gold, and leash the homing swallows!
Then quell the lucent day-spring of Mozart,
The deep moon-haunted gloaming of Beethoven.
Exile the matin breezes on the hills !
Then banish Handel, mighty with the morn.
When all rude mystery of the northern dawn,
All magic of the monstrous mountains old,
Hath passed from dreams, and faëry forlorn

Affinities

Lies at the heart, forgotten of every song ;
When the grim iron gods are banished all,
And their weird shadows haunt no forest wild ;
When heroes slay no more, and love's enchantments
Are known not ever by moon-washed mead or mere,
And youth is cold, and beauty's lip is grey,—
Yea, when this fiery core, this earth, this bird
Winged in weird night, this gusty miracle,
Drops in the void a cinder and a rind,
Then ban the tingling touch, the torturing flame,
The 'witching winds and wizard storms of Wagner !
These from life's azure shine, and reign serene
Beyond the quarrels of the sons of time.

There is a Providence for all things fair,
Touching sweet dust to everlastingness,
That, though it perish, it may not wholly pass,
But live a legend and a lovely name,
And dwell in time a common heritage.
Though wounded Reims plead to the wandering
sky,
Though Ypres be desolation, and Louvain,
Of splendid memory, mourn her ravished soul,
These rise immortal from the yeast of war,
And their avenging beauty evermore
Shall draw the dead to judgment. Beauty lives
A winning angel in a wayward world,

The Red, Red Dawn

And, passing hence, is an enduring dream
That wounds us with sweet sorrow ; armoured
power

Can smite not smirch her brightness, yea at last,
Laid lowly, lives because she pities him.

Though pain be ours, oh, still keep anger wise !

Can Prussia blot out Weimar ? or Berlin

Eclipse the stars in Jena's sky or Bonn's ?

Or steal the gracious past of Nuremberg ?

Though stern we stand for honour as before,

And dare not fail of triumph, though our will,

Bastioned with freedom, thewed with frozen
steel,

Frowns toward the eastern storm and Germany,

Yea, though we twain may touch at heart no more

As in past time, remembering all our dead,

Yet nature calls to nature ; the great mother

Gathers her balm about us, her sweet flowers

Shall win us back to kindness. Much remains.

Still Rhine is lovely ; lofty Heidelberg,

Like pointing hope, up-piled in azure heaven,

Still greets in dream fair Oxford's sunset spires ;

The winds are common still ; the friendly tides

Kiss both our lands ; and over us in heaven,

The leal night moves with fond and mutual stars ;

Yea still at many hearths of glowing pine

By Austrian wolds, in weary German cities,

Affinities

For hearts that love not us shines Shakespeare's
soul ;
And losses, past repair, to homely eyes
Draw tears for sorrier Hamlets, sadder Lears.
Fleet are the iron thunders of rude war,
Swift the white angers of unruly hours ;
But truth remains, and beauty ; and great art,
Like a sweet marriage link 'twixt rival kings,
Unites in gracious bondage all mankind,
Serving the permanent soul. The tides and waves
Pass to their bound ; the deeps in calm abide.

Praise to those powers that, throned in central
calm,
Speak still or sing in thoughtful silences
Though all the world be jarred, powers that sustain
The human spirit in its mortal home
Against all shocks of circumstance, that give
To common day a rare beatitude,
To earth a consecration, and to life
An exaltation and a bourn afar.
In single strength shall no man greatly stand :
Helpers serene upon us minister
In pensive hours, and lead us gently on
By wisdom and melodious argument
To bounteous breath and universal joy,

The Red, Red Dawn

To moments when the wind-blown amaranth
flowers

Sway toward us in the lucent dells of heaven.
Such regal gifts hath life ! such royal needs !

Oh, ye that trim your tapers in the gloom,
And nurse your gnomish spites, stand forth in light
Upon the ocean marge of this great time ;
Listen to the Voice that calls from age to age
In many tones, through many media,
The aspiration various, the cry
Of life creative, evermore renewed
In spirit, and in splendour, and sweet power,
Whereof is born the wonder of the world,
All truth that glints on godhead's trailing robe,
All love that dreams, all faith that sings, one Voice
That all the general heart may feel and hear
Diversely, as the mind is harp or star,
In music, poesy, yea in all of life
That beats with shadowy means to shining ends.
Athwart th' embattled empires—lo ! a hand.
Across the withered years—behold ! a smile.

To Germany

On Her Overtures of Peace, December, 1916

YOU hold sweet Peace too cheaply, you that
broke

Her compacts, and, with rage of gross desire,
Harried the kindly lands with sword and fire,
And laughed a ghoulish laugh while, stroke on stroke
Crashed—laughed while blood of innocent lives did
soak

The homes they loved, while cities, pyre on pyre,
Flared in a night made mad with lust and ire,
And terror, and hell's weird vomit of flame and
smoke!

Not yet the doom. The desperate days prolong
Anguish and hope. Stale dawn and sad sunset
Shall be till all your pride is vain regret,
And all your boast is as a ribald song
By tears o'ertaken, and the lust made strong
Is withered all. Not yet, sad foe, not yet.

Edith Cavell

A WOMAN, vowed to mercy and to prayer ;
Her casual words and looks were charities ;
Her passing, gracious as a summer breeze,
Fondled the heart and left a favour there.
Stern men in pain were kinder for her care ;
And wavering lives through her by fair degrees
Grew strong to live or die. Such souls as these
Spill blessings, and are worshipped unaware.

In quietude she broke her daily bread,
A gentle being, loving her own land
And all that suffered : she did not understand
The narrow ways of love that tyrants tread ;
She shielded hers and theirs ; and, meekly dead,
She is a power to kindle and command.

Poland

GREAT armies come, they pass like scourging
flame,

And like the hungry locust-cloud they go :

And we abide, heirs to an ancient woe,

'Mid ruin regal, ravaged, yet the same.

Patient and proud, we bleed whom none can blame,

The hapless spoil of every pitiless foe :

No bitterness can man on men bestow

Whereof with tears we have not drunk—save shame.

To beauty and far-off joy our vows are given.

With soul unsoiled, 'mid time's too-long distress,

We sow fair dreams, and reap unhappiness

For ever, and for ever are helpless driven

Through blood and torture to the stairs of heaven.

And shall God heed not, O ye merciless ?

To Greece

On the Repudiation of her Treaty with Serbia

SO now we know you as the lesser breed
That loves not honour, but to safe desire
Doth humble duty. Regal tasks require
A royal salutation. Sovran need
Makes brave men kings ; and splendid moments
speed
To ends august the souls that dare aspire—
That still against the tempest, high and higher,
Beat to their goal, unfearful of their deed.

Still rings the royal name of Pericles ;
And Marathon is mighty to the free.
What radiant heroes rode the subject sea
From Greece of old ! But lustier days bring ease
To lesser men, who soil with sophistries
Honour—which is the soul of liberty.

Venezelos

ALONELY Titan on a troubled strand ;
One star ablaze amid a murky sky ;
One voice at one with all free winds that cry
To hapless lives that dare not understand ;
One heart austere that hears the high command,
And will not wince at fate, nor fret, nor lie,
Ready to live with freedom, and to die
If honour desolate leave his native land.

Aloof in grief, in purpose proudly sure,
He moves, a spirit with a far-set gaze
Beyond the little moment's blame or praise,
Th' intrepid follower of the deathless lure,
Great with a dream, sublimely insecure,
Breasting with dauntless faith disastrous days !

Deeds, Not Words

1915

An open letter of exhortation in verse to certain
obstructionists inside and outside Parliament

LET Parties perish. Britons all are we.
Though zealous each for lofty liberties,
Not by his single will shall man be free,
But by cool faith and large allegiances.

Not once nor twice in time's embattled world
This land hath fronted fate with sanguine brow,
And from Pride's bastioned thrones with might
hath hurled
The foes of peoples. Are we poltroons now?—

From France, from Flanders, from Gallipoli,
From burning wastes where cheering freemen
tread,
With buoyant hearts, revering destiny,
We answer, o'er our hundred thousand dead,

Deeds, Not Words

Not in our might alone, but in that Power
That guides all justice when all joy is set,
We travail ; and in this tremendous hour
Prove by strong deeds the faith we cherish yet—

That freedom is for all, as God for all ;
That man's hale heart no despot's heel shall
grind ;
Reviled we rose, and royally we fall,
Unconquered, for the kingdom of mankind.

And where the sword hath wronged the sword shall
win
A red contrition : for the passions breed
Passions for ever ; and man's monstrous sin
Is slain for ever by God's master-deed.

Fling forth the baubles ! for the times are stern.
Behold ! the rout of peoples, horror-driven !
God, make us zealots !—passionate souls that burn
In this great cause of Freedom, Home, and
Heaven !

Thanksgiving

TO That which dwells in central peace be praise.
And for the revelation of this might
Be deep thanksgiving. Now man walks in light,
A master-spirit that hears and that obeys.
A Power more potent than our Yeas and Nays
Hath touched this flesh to greatness, and made
bright
Our nature as a beacon in the night
Of this world's darkness, where the dawn delays.

Thanks be to Him to Whom all great is small,
That even in Hell, a-stare with bleeding eyes,
With horrors foul, this mortal life may rise
To stainless triumph ; though on death we fall
And torment, the sure soul hath festival,
And soars, though sorrowing, unto sacrifice !

Ready

1917

LONG have we waited, and have suffered long,
Yea with a mighty patience borne th'
assault.

Gone are the slow and vacillating thoughts.
Our wills that late like sulky rebels stood
Each for his own, while Freedom summoned all,
Are gathered now to one wide-whelming tide
That, strong with the impulse of a straining sea,
Sets shoreward with the winds of victory,
Invanquishable as death and stern as doom.

Now may our days be clarions, and our deeds
Be royal brothers to our regal hopes !
Let thinking father action, action power,
And power obedience. Let each man be king
Of his own empire, so subject himself
That all his members and his moments bow
In fealty to their lord—the liege of England !
Hum loom, clang forge through all the thrilling
shires !

Let every implement from spade to pen
Be as a shining sword in knightly hands

The Red, Red Dawn

And drive for Heaven and England !
Be every thought like a hale prophet's word,
Lit with an inspiration from afar,
Brightening the soul of England !

So convolved,
So sensitive the ranging nerves of life,
So swift to feel each faint and far effect,
That battles hang upon a lever's turn,
That one brave woman's smile may change a world,
And one true man by his strong nameless act
May breach the secret citadel of power
And bring an empire down. Great is the time,
And every hour hath ages at its heart
And seals the fate of nations. Where is he,
The sweat upon his brow, his task well done,
Whose heart stands now not tip-toe, proud to say :
" Heaven helping, *this* for England ! "
Where is the life that cannot feel to-day
The greatness of its office ? Regal all,
Our feet are on the summits of proud time ;
Grave centuries shall toward these moments gaze,
And, passing, hail them with saluting hands.
The world is tremulous with a splendid thing,
Felt in the breast a trouble yet a joy,
August yet simple, grandiose beyond dreams,
That adds a majesty to stilly death
And unto wounds a song. Again to earth

Ready

The gods return and sit at poor men's hearths,
And common lives take glory. Wider yet
Range the strong wings of freedom ! From these
heights

A lovelier sunrise swims to human ken ;
Hints of vast noons and nights with grander stars,
Drawn in the breath, dilate the heart ; the soul,
Presageful on the glimmering shores of thought,
Hears from afar deep tidal murmurs come
Blown in from some immeasurable sea.

The time is touched to spirit, and intent
Listens and wonders like a thing surprised.
Life's at the poise, impatient for the flight ;
Heaven to the zenith quickens, and the hour
Awaits the vital Word that lifts the world !

Where is the heart that in this clangorous Isle
Envies pale satraps in their palaces
In palm-hung peace 'mid gardens to the moon ?
The dazzling pageant of all the Orient past
Dims to the splendour flung down time to-day
From England !—this strong tower, this stuff of
dreams,

This light of song, this mother-heart, this England !
Showed ever life so god-like to wide heaven
Since stars and life the Spirit-mandate heard,
And from the fiery mists o' the nebula

The Red, Red Dawn

Took the young skies with glory, as at this hour ?
God, make us meet for this occasion ! Speed
Our feet to service ; fire our hearts to seize
The lowly tasks that do ennoble men.
Make mute our mouths in sorrow, and make clean
Our lips in song : make us in purpose steel,
In pity dew. Now, honoured countrymen,
At last—at last ! under the prospering skies
To the breach ! to the breach !—*For England and
St. George !*

Easter Ode

On America's Espousal of the Cause of Freedom

THE pondering Titan stirs at last,
And west to east flings far reply :
The present leaps to clasp the past,
And shudders with a splendid cry
For man, for human liberty,
For life, that bids mankind be free
Within the great Taskmaster's eye !

The dead are quiet in their graves.

Yet free men hail their Washington ;
Still ring through azure's airy naves
Large, lusty Whitman's clangorous staves,
The starry tones of Emerson :
Oh, sage and mentor, mild and wise,
From the deep gleaming core of things
Speak, seer, whose fervent far-set eyes
Range 'yond the temporal thrones of kings
To that high parliament that lies
Warded of seraph wings !
Speak now, great Lincoln, very lord
In majesty and spacious ruth,
Sad with the sorrows of the sword,
Kissing the lily lips of truth,
Speak now, and touch from brine to brine

The Red, Red Dawn

These ardours till our battles shine
Toward issues all divine !

O voices of the great and strong !
O spirit of the fair and wise !
Lighten this hurricane of wrong,
Lead to the halcyon skies,
That man through war's mad night may rise
And mount the morn with song !

Not yet may men be less than Man
Though tortures threat and bar ;
'The Voice that through creation ran
And named for man a star
Quickens the starry soul He gave,
And man the brilliant and the brave
Follows the Voice afar !
Though still his dreams, but half divine,
Are greater than his days,
Though still the broken splendours shine
On time's unsplendid ways,
Yet all the years his heart hath crossed
Were linked with that not wholly lost—
That fired the tongues at Pentecost
With prescience and with praise.
More great than we ourselves we stand,
Oh brothers in the west

Easter Ode

And in the east ; we feel the hand
That leads us to the quest,
And in the might of one command
Though bleeding we are blest.
Through all the cruel, cruel tears,
On through the poignant pregnant years
We follow light where light appears
To goals half manifest,
We follow faith beyond our fears,
Till false is slain and darkness clears
And God and man have rest.
One, one is all, and all are one,
Borne on a tidal stream,
We go the way the past hath gone
And catch or lose the gleam ;
But man till earth's last sun hath shone
Must battle for his dream :
While flesh takes more than soul allows
Some Golgotha in time must be ;
With blood on lorn eternal brows
Some Christ must climb to Calvary,
And sorrows mourn beneath the boughs
Of dim Gethsemane.

Oh peoples stirring in the dark,
That wait 'twixt hope and mazed dismay,
Already glows the tiny spark,

The Red, Red Dawn

Full soon the broadening flame of day,
And tyrants shall not pass this way.
Down fields of slain though despots ride
And boast amid their crucified,
The secret winds tell not their ears
The mustering of th' avenging spears,
The ghostly legions that enrol,
 Whose Marshal is the Soul.
Who boast the sword, the sword makes vain :
 Life's ghostly law is more than bread,
Than loss, than life, than all of pain :
 Triumphant over dread,
Lo ! Spirit stands 'mid tears again
 Resurgent from the dead !
Within this world, whate'er betides,
 A God at last decides.

Oh Titan in the wandering west,
At this austere tremendous hour,
In honoured freedom's holy quest,
 With splendour and with speedful power
Back to the proud maternal breast
Returns at last the lost " Mayflower " :
The Pilgrims from the " desert shore "
 Turn home to die for faith once more !

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